

## Message Text

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ORIGIN PA-02

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TO USDEL SECRETARY PRIORITY

UNCLAS STATE 099381 TOSEC 040133

FOR HODDING CARTER FROM TOM RESTON

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, OVIP (VANCE)

SUBJECT: PRESS BRIEFING

1. THE TUESDAY, APRIL 18 NOON PRESS BRIEFING FOCUSED  
MAINLY ON MIDDLE EAST TOPICS AND AMB. ATHERTON'S IMPENDING  
VISIT TO THE AREA.

2. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION, APPARENTLY GENERATED BY  
REPORTING FROM THE SECRETARY'S PARTY, ABOUT WHETHER THE  
U.S. WAS PREPARING TO LAUNCH NEW AND SPECIFIC AMERICAN  
INITIATIVES FOR THE MIDDLE EAST, THE SPOKESMAN SAID:

"WE ARE PRESENTLY IN CONSULTATION WITH THE PARTIES  
TO DETERMINE HOW WE CAN BEST MOVE THE PEACE PROCESS  
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FORWARD. AS WE HAVE SAID IN THE PAST, WE WILL NOT  
HESITATE TO PUT FORWARD OUR OWN IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS WHEN  
WE THINK THEY WOULD HELP THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS.

"WE HAVE NOT YET REACHED ANY DEFINITIVE DECISION ABOUT  
POSSIBLE NEXT STEPS, BUT THIS WILL BE A SUBJECT TAKEN UP  
BY AMB. ATHERTON ON HIS TRIP."

3. IN RESPONSE TO THE QUESTION OF WHETHER A GENEVA

CONFERENCE WAS NOW THE MAIN FOCUS OF AMERICAN DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST, GENERATED SPECIFICALLY BY THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE OF CARTER AND CEAUSESCU AFTER THEIR MEETING IN WASHINGTON, THE SPOKESMAN REFUSED TO GO BEYOND THE COMMUNIQUE, OR TO INTERPRET IT, OR TO ANSWER THE QUESTION.

4. THE SPOKESMAN ALSO REFUSED TO RENDER A SUBSTANTIVE JUDGMENT ABOUT THE INTERPRETATION OF UN RESOLUTION 242 IN THE WAKE OF LAST SUNDAY'S STATEMENT BY THE ISRAELI CABINET.

5. ON AFRICAN QUESTIONS, THE SPOKESMAN SAID OF THE SECRETARY'S RECENT VISITS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA:

"...THE DOOR HAS BEEN LEFT OPEN FOR FUTURE TALKS.

"AS THE SECRETARY SAID AFTER MEETING WITH RHODESIAN LEADERS IN SALISBURY, 'THE RHODESIANS HAVE INDICATED TO US THAT THEY WISH TO TAKE TIME TO REFLECT SERIOUSLY UPON OUR PROPOSALS.' HE ALSO SAID THAT WE SHALL CONTINUE TO WORK TO GIVE ALL THE HELP WE CAN TO TRYING TO FIND A PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM OF RHODESIA."  
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6. ASKED FOR A COMMENT ABOUT A STATEMENT BY THE ETHIOPIAN AMBASSADOR TO KENYA THAT ETHIOPIA MIGHT CARRY WAR ACROSS THE ETHIOPIAN BORDER INTO SOMALIA THE SPOKESMAN SAID:

"WE ARE DISTURBED BOTH BY THE ETHIOPIAN AMBASSADOR'S STATEMENT (THIS WAS THE ETHIOPIAN AMBASSADOR TO KENYA) AND BY THE REPORTS OF CONTINUED GUERILLA FIGHTING IN THE OGADEN. IT WOULD BE TRAGIC IF A RENEWED OUTBREAK OF VIOLENCE WERE TO COMPROMISE THE OPPORTUNITY PRESENTED BY THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE FORCES OF THE SOMALI DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC TO MOVE TOWARDS A SETTLEMENT. IN ORDER TO IMPROVE THE PROSPECTS FOR A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT, WE BELIEVE ALL SIDES SHOULD REFRAIN FROM FURTHER USE OF VIOLENCE AND THAT BOTH ETHIOPIA AND SOMALIA SHOULD TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY GOOD OFFICES COMMITTEE TO TRY TO REACH A SETTLEMENT OF ALL OUTSTANDING DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THEM." CHRISTOPHER

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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